

REMARKS

The claims have not been amended. Claims 10-20 have been previously withdrawn. Accordingly, claims 1-9 are currently pending in the application, of which claims 1 and 7 are independent claims.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3-5, and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2001-319583 applied for by Kado, *et al.* ("Kado"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the reference or references, when combined, must disclose or suggest all of the claim limitations. The motivation to modify the prior art and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based upon a patent applicant's disclosure. *See in re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. Assuming *arguendo* that the references may be combined and a reasonable expectation of success exists, the combined references do not disclose or suggest all of the claim limitations of claim 1. Specifically, claim 1 recites, *inter alia*:

a sealant formed on opposing surfaces of the first substrate and the second substrate around an outer circumferential area of the first

substrate and the second substrate to seal the first substrate and the second substrate,

wherein the sealant is formed of regions having a first width of substantially the same size and regions having a second width, wherein the second width is greater than the first width, the sealant having a substantially uniform thickness (emphasis added)

Applicants respectfully submit that even if Kado is modified as the Office Action suggests, Kado still does not teach or suggest at least these features. The Office Action recognizes that Kado "does not explicitly disclose the sealant is formed having substantially uniform thickness." (Office Action, page 3, emphasis added). But since "Kado discloses the display panel is sealed by conventional sealing approach", the Office Action continues, "it is noted that (as also has been disclosed by the applicant in prior art section page 2 lines 14-16) conventionally sealant is applied between the two substrates with uniform thickness ..." (Office Action, page 3, emphasis added). This disclosure, however, teaches a step in a plasma display panel manufacturing process. Specifically, "the frit is generally deposited with a uniform thickness." (Applicants' specification, page 2, line 13). Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that this disclosure, which relates to a process used to manufacture a plasma display panel, may not be relied upon to teach the fabricated plasma display panel recited in claim 1. Accordingly, for at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request that the Office Action be withdrawn.

Furthermore, even if Kado's sealant layers 62 and 64 were deposited with a uniform thickness as suggested by the Office Action, Applicants respectfully submit that Kado does not teach, either explicitly or inherently, that the fabricated plasma display panel would have a sealant (i.e. layers 62 and 64) with a substantially uniform thickness. As Applicants note, when the frit is not varied at specific areas, such as areas where the sealant clips are provided, the thickness of the frit may vary in those regions. This may cause minute gaps that generate noise during the panel's operation (see Applicants' specification, page 2, lines 12-21). Unlike the prior

art, Applicants' invention provides a plasma display panel that substantially prevents the formation of minute gaps in a sealing area between substrates, thereby reducing noise caused by the minute gaps by controlling the sealant width (specification, page 8, lines 9-12). Because Kado teaches varying the width of sealing layer 64 only, Kado does not inherently teach a fabricated plasma display panel with layers 62 and 64 that have substantially the same thickness. Accordingly, Kado fails to teach or suggest at least "a sealant formed on opposing surfaces of the first substrate and the second substrate around an outer circumferential area of the first substrate and the second substrate, ... the sealant having a substantially uniform thickness."

Independent claim 7 recites similar features as claim 1 and is patentable over Kado for at the reasons noted above with regard to claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of independent claims 1 and 7. Claims 3-5 and 8-9 depend from claim 1 or claim 7 and are allowable at least for this reason. Since none of the other prior art of record, whether taken alone or in any combination, discloses or suggests all the features of the claimed invention, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 7, and all the claims that depend therefrom, are allowable.

Claims 2 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kado in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,817,917 issued to Kado, *et al.* ("Kado '917"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is allowable over Kado and Kado '917 fails to cure the deficiencies of Kado noted above with regard to claim 1. Hence, claims 2 and 6 are allowable at least because they depend from an allowable claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 2 and 6.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the pending Office Action and respectfully submit that all of the stated grounds for rejection have been overcome or rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number below to expedite prosecution.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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